

Message Text

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15

ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SAM-01 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02

INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 SCCT-01 IO-11 SAJ-01 /073 W

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P R 201725Z FEB 76

FM AMEMBASSY MADRID

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 4681

INFO AMEMBASSY DUBLIN

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY ROME

AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY LISBON

AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM

AMEMBASSY OSLO

USMISSION NATO

USMISSION EC BRUSSELS

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT PFOR SP

SUBJ: ETA TERRORISM BACKFIRES

REF: MADRID 0984

1. ETA RECENTLY ANNOUNCED IT WOULD CONTINUE ITS CAMPAIGN OF ASSASSINATION OF MAYORS WHO "COLLABORATED" WITH THE GOVT, AS IT HAD ASSASSINATED 9 FEB THE MAYOR OF GALDACANO. TWO RECENT BUMBLED ETA TERRORIST ACTS, HOWEVER, HAVE PROVOKED CRITICISM AND WEAKENED SOMEWHAT THE TACIT ACCEPTANCE ACCORDED TO THEM AMONG THE BASQUES.

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2. ON 10 FEB, THE SAME DAY THAT ETA-V CLAIMED RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE ASSASSINATION OF THE MAYOR OF GALDACANO, A 37-YEAR OLD WORKER WAS ASSASSINATED IN THE BASQUE TOWN OF CIZURQUIL. FROM THE BEGINNING IT WAS FELT HIS MURDER RESULTED FROM A MISTAKE IN IDENTITY, AND ON 12 FEB THE ETA ADMITTED THAT THE ASSASSINATION HAD BEEN AN ERROR. THOUSANDS ATTENDED THE VICTIM'S FUNERAL IN PROTEST.

3. GROWING BASQUE DISGUST WITH THE ETA WAS ALSO FUELED BY THE PROTRACTED KIDNAPING OF A BASQUE INDUSTRIALIST'S SON (SEE REFTEL). THE YOUTH WAS FINALLY FREED IN FRENCH TERRITORY-- WHERE HE HAD BEEN HELD--NEAR THE SPANISH FRONTIER 18 FEB. BUT THE 36 DAYS OF THE CASE WERE MARKED THROUGHOUT BY IRRESOLUTION AND DIVISIONS AMONG ETA GROUPS OVER THE LEGITIMACY OF THE KIDNAPING, THE SIZE OF THE RANSOM, AND A DEMAND BY THE KIDNAPERS FOR ADDITIONAL MONEY AFTER THE FIST HAD BEEN PAID.

4. NONETHELESS, AMCONSUL BILBAO NOTES THAT ETA-V (THE LEADING ETA GROUP) HAD MANAGED TO SIFFICIENTLY DISASSOCIATE ITSELF FROM BOTH EVENTS BY BLAMING THEM ON MAVERICK COMMANDO GROUPS TO AVOID DRAINING ITS RESERVIOR OF PUBLIC ACQUIESCENCE. THEY STILL MAINTAIN THE CAPABILITY TO KILL, AND SOME MEASURE OF LEADERSHIP, EVEN THOUGH THERE ARE NUMEROUS SPLINTER GROUPS NOT WHOLLY UNDER CONTROL.
STABLER

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Message Attributes

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Margaret P. Grafeld
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